

TOWN OF TIVERTON RHODE ISLAND

HARBOR COMMISSION

*343 HIGHLAND ROAD
TIVERTON RHODE ISLAND 02878*

*John McEwing, Chairman
David Stewart, Vice-Chairman
Harris Gruber, Secretary
Bob Dixon
Roger Winiarski
Frank diMauro
Bruce Cox*

*Contact: John McEwing
Email: sv906905@netscape.net
Telephone: 401-624-2276*

Dave Vannier, Harbormaster

MINUTES OF MEETING

*January 11, 2010
held at Town Hall*

Members present: John McEwing, David Stewart, Harris Gruber, Bob Dixon, Roger Winiarski, Frank diMauro, Bruce Cox; and Dave Vannier, Harbormaster.

Guests: Town Administrator Jim Goncalo (for a short time); Chris Spencer, Town Planner; resident Jim Porter.....and a reporter from ?Newport Daily News?

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman John McEwing, presiding.

Minutes of December 14 and December 17 were approved as presented.

CORRESPONDENCE -

1- A letter was received from the Coastal Resources Management Council (RICRMC) regarding a meeting to take place at 1 Capitol Hill on January 13 at 6:00 PM, regarding changes being made to the Ocean Special Area Management Plan, chapter 46-23, Chapter 6: Recreation and Tourism.

NEW CONSTRUCTION - None

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS -

1 – Jim Porter, a resident of Riverside Drive, inquired as to current status of mooring management, to which Harbormaster Dave Vannier gave a short review of number of moorings presently spoken for and status of plans to send out applications

for the 2010 season. Mr. Porter then inquired as to regulations regarding the size of boat that is permitted on a "pulley-line" riparian mooring, as he wanted to do this with an 18' boat. Dave Vannier replied that, as far as he knows, this mooring type is intended for dinghies and skiffs and that 18' is too large. Discussion ensued; no further action taken.

OLD BUSINESS -

1 – LNG Facility Siting - Currently, Weaver's Cove/Hess Amerada has the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the new Commandant of the United States Coast Guard District One in favor of the project, which includes both a pipeline terminus in Mount Hope Bay and a terminal on shore on the Fall River waterfront. The previous USCG Commandant was opposed to the project.

Part of the proposal allows extremely large (950') LNG tankers to navigate upstream and down Narraganset Bay and Mount Hope Bay beneath the Mount Hope Bridge, some 140 times per year. The two issues that seem to most energize opposition to the project are:

- (1) The explosive/fire hazards of LNG in close proximity to such a large population density;*
- (2) The critically low and narrow bridge clearances for these large ships under bridges, particularly under the Mount Hope Bridge, with virtually no room for navigational or ship-handling error, with the attendant threat, thus, to the Mount Hope Bridge itself;*
- (3) The proposed/existing requirement that all on-water traffic and all bridge-crossing vehicular traffic be halted, both on the Newport-Jamestown Bridge and the Mount Hope Bridge, for extended periods during the passage of such ships. All arguments about this point regard the impeding of citizen movement and traffic jams that would ensue plus the virtual immobilizing of boat traffic, especially during the boating season, when hundreds, if not thousands of boats may be involved for extended periods;*
- (4) The navigational and ship-handling hazards and challenges that are present if such huge vessels are permitted to operate in such physically restricted waters, such as the natural confines of Narragansett and Mount Hope Bays.*

Based on what was known at the time, the Tiverton Harbor Commission voted 5-2 to oppose the siting of these facilities, as proposed, at our June 29 2009 meeting.

Harris Gruber noted that, despite the new USCG Commandant's approval of the project, numerous local municipalities and civic groups have objected to the proposal

and that, despite some opinions that the project is inevitable, objections and voices against it are getting more numerous and louder. Harris agreed to gather current information as to the range and depth of these objections, to be presented at the February 1 Harbor Commission meeting.

SAKONNET RIVER BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – None

STONE BRIDGE STATUS UPDATE -

1 – In a conversation with Chris Spencer, Town Planner and Chairman the Stone Bridge Committee, it was noted that \$65,000 is still presently available in some Town fund for some portion of the improvements being sought. A proposal had been made by the Town for inclusion in the new National Recovery Act (stimulus package), but the paperwork was not sufficiently far along (only 10%) to qualify as a “shovel-ready” project and so was not eligible at that time.

Bruce Cox remarked that he thought that \$135,000 might still available from a fund intended for the breakup of the old Jamestown Bridge, that had not been used.

Chris Spencer mentioned that this project, through CRMC and the RIDOT,, is on the Transportation Improvement Project priority list. Estimates for repair/reconstruction have previously been submitted to FEMA.. The complete project, including “enhancements”, is estimated at \$3,200,000; Stabilization only: \$1,200,000.

Chris intends to have further discussion with the Department of Public Works in the coming weeks, as well as Stone Bridge Committee members. He will have more to say for our next meeting.

Harris Gruber volunteered to put together a preliminary synopsis of actions to date on the Stone Bridge project, to report at the February 1 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS -

1 – Recreational Fishing Licenses. It is reported that Federal authorities have mandated that licenses for all individuals will be required for recreational fishing, the purpose being to determine which species are being most caught. The proposal also mandates that a fishing license in one state will be honored in all other states, precluding the necessity for obtaining multiple licenses. Fees for such licenses will accrue directly to the states. Though the RI Governor objected and directed otherwise (against such a license), the Federal government said, “Sorry (we prevail)”. It was pointed out that the RI State Constitution specifies free fishing for all residents. Apparently, even commercial fisherman will be required to obtain a recreational

fishing license, under the proposed law, for family recreational fishing. Bob Dixon volunteered to get more information.

2 – Abandoned Boats. Bob Dixon passed around an issue of the ?April? 2009 SOUNDINGS magazine that contained an interesting article on “Abandoned Boats”, relating to what diverse communities are doing to get rid of them.

On this subject, the 39' Ericson sloop that had remained, unused, on a mooring in Tiverton Harbor, winter and summer, thus becoming a potential hazard and liability, has been sold/given away, with the stipulation that some (unspecified) small amount of money be donated for the use of the Tiverto Harbor Patrol.. The boat has been hauled at Standish Marine and the mast has been un-stepped. Bob Dixon volunteered to address a letter to the Town Administrator on this issue.

HARBORMASTER'S REPORT -

1 - Harbor Patrol Boat is in need of maintenance, including injectors, water pump and a new prop, cost about \$2000, about the same as last year; about \$2200 left remains in the budget.

2 – New regulations regarding illegal moorings have been approved by the Town Council.

3 – Harbor Patrol crew, citing illegal boating operations , working on the water approximately three times the hours of last year, yielded approximately \$6000 in fines; last year, this amount was \$830.

4 – The efficacy of acquiring a second patrol boat, rather than pursuing simply the replacement of the existing patrol boat, was discussed. Earlier discussions had revealed the possible availability of government grants for such a project or even seeking a direct boat donation to accomplish this. Discussion to be continued at the February 1 meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted – Harris Gruber, Secretary

All residents and other interested parties are invited to attend any of our meetings and to provide pertinent input. If you would like to receive email/mailed copies of our Agendas and Minutes, please contact: Harris Gruber, Secretary varnishman@cox.net or 843-906-6682.